

South Korea's Social Policy Response to Covid-19: Swift and Bipartisan Attempts

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CRC 1342 / No. 7

Covid-19

Social Policy Response Series

Jaemin Shim

South Korea's Social Policy Response to Covid-19: Swift and Bipartisan Attempts



Global Dynamics
of Social Policy CRC 1342

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Jaemin Shim

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SOUTH KOREA'S SOCIAL POLICY RESPONSE TO COVID-19: SWIFT AND BIPARTISAN ATTEMPTS

Jaemin Shim *

ABSTRACT

The paper maps out South Korea's key social policy responses to the Covid-19 pandemic based on an analysis of legislation and budget proposals adopted between January 2020 and September 2020. Both data sources indicate that the South Korean government clearly utilized social policy tools to mitigate the damage incurred by the pandemic. First, eight out of 32 social policy laws were explicitly designed in response to the pandemic. Second, an unprecedented four rounds of supplementary budgets were approved to protect both the economic and public health of the people. In light of the speed and the degree of political consensus vis-à-vis comparable years in the past, it is clear that South Korea's social policy response to Covid-19 was swift and bipartisan. Moreover, judging by the country's previous experience of turning "a crisis" into "an opportunity" for welfare expansion, the current pandemic has the potential to lead to a consolidation of South Korea's welfare state.

INTRODUCTION

The first confirmed Covid-19 infection in South Korea was reported on 20 January 2020. The country saw a sudden spike in case numbers in late February, i.e. from 10 on 19 February to 346 on 21 February, mostly from a mass gathering at Shincheonji church located in Daegu. Since then, South Korea swiftly took various measures to flatten the infection curve, such as conducting extensive tests in a rapid manner, isolating the infected in shelters, and tracking and tracing those who had contact with infected persons with the help of the latest technology.

By mid-March, the government had managed to contain the spread of the outbreak without having to rely on drastic lockdown measures like those taken in China and certain European countries such as Italy and Spain early in the year. The country's superb Covid-19 management has been repeatedly noted by the global media, e.g. BBC (2020), DW News (2020), CNN (2020), Al Jazeera (2020); moreover, the performance was also reflected in indicators compiled by the UN (2020) and the University of Cambridge (2020), both of which rank South Korea as top among 37 OECD countries. As of 23 October, South Korea had 8.81 deaths per million, substantially lower than other developed countries such as the US (679.06 per million), the UK (665.03 per million), France (503.92 per million), or Germany (120.1 per million). As a consolidated presidential democracy, the country has a fixed general election schedule. It is noteworthy that, in the midst of the pandemic, South Korea held its general election according to the original electoral calendar on 15 April. With the highest voter participation rate in twenty years—66.2%—and no surge in the Covid-19 infections, the country demonstrated the possibility of holding a large-scale election without sacrificing either democratic ideals or the health and safety of its people (Shim, 2020; Wong, 2020). Currently, South Korea is led by left-leaning President Moon Jae-in, and in the 2020 general election his party secured 60% of legislative seats, the largest parliamentary majority since the country's re-democratization in 1987.

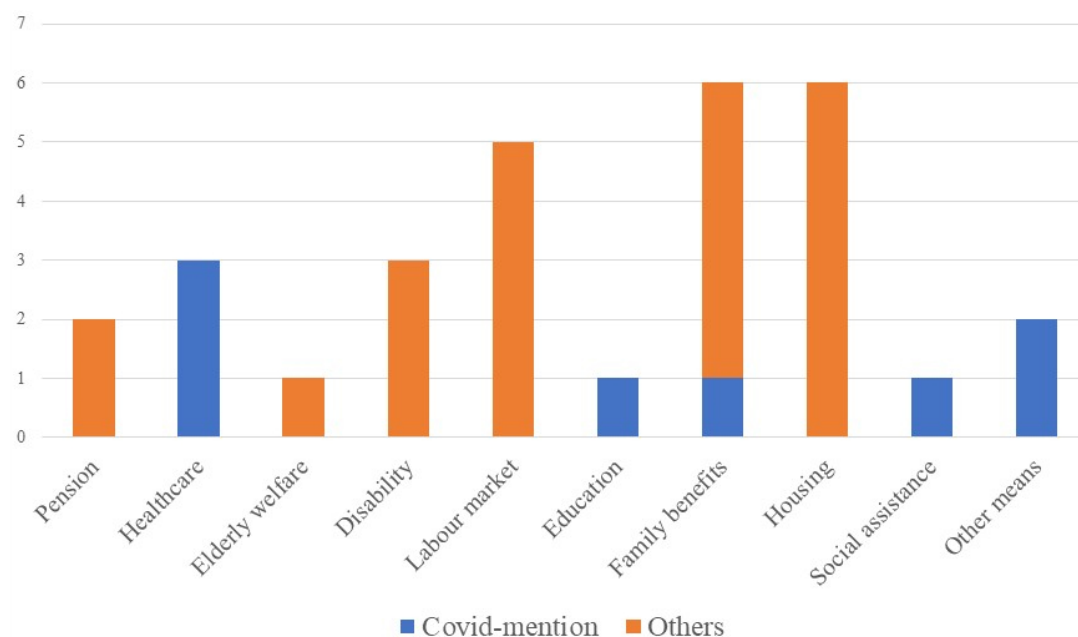
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Social policy responses designed to cope with the pandemic's damage can be observed in legislative measures taken in the domains of healthcare, education, family benefits, social assistance, and social policy by other means.¹ However, similar to other pandemic-hit developed countries, South Korea's most important policy took the form of a financial stimulus package (which largely consisted of social assistance and social policy by other means) through four rounds of supplementary budgets. All in all, social policy responses thus far have been swift and bipartisan; I draw this conclusion based on the contents and submission patterns of all bills and budgets proposed between 1 January and 30 September 2020 in South Korea.² Moreover, drawing insights from the country's previous welfare expansion experiences, there have been some political signs that can potentially turn this pandemic "crisis" into a "chance" for further welfare state consolidation.

SOUTH KOREA'S SOCIAL POLICY RESPONSE

In an attempt to gauge key social policy responses, the paper examined two data points—proposed bills and budgets. With regard to the former, 32 social policy related bills were passed during the period of observation; of these, eight explicitly mention Covid-19 as the primary motivation behind the bill's introduction. Specifically, Figure 1 shows the distribution of 32 pieces of social policy legislation across the ten categories of interest³ and the extent to which each category includes social policy bills originating from the Covid-19 crisis.

Figure 1. Social Policy Legislation Passed in South Korea (by categories)



Although the most frequently occurring social policy categories are "family benefits" and "housing," neither are the principal legal measures explicitly adopted to handle the Covid-19 crisis. As can be expected from the fact that Covid-19 is a public health issue and, at the same time, a crisis causing widespread financial damage,

- ¹ "Social policy by other means" are here defined as two kinds of unconventional social policy from the viewpoint of mainstream comparative welfare state research: First, social welfare measures that are functionally equivalent to formal systems of social protection and, second, benefits provided by non-state actors (for further details see Seelkopf and Starke, 2019).
- ² The data were obtained from the National Legislation Search Centre (<http://www.law.go.kr/main.html>) provided by the Ministry of Justice.
- ³ Whether a submitted bill corresponds to any of the social policy categories in the project is based on the reading of bill's title and key summaries. Considering that certain bills fall into several social policy categories, the coding allowed multiple membership.

public “healthcare” and the two categories directly related to financial support—“social assistance” and “other means”—have been the key social policy fields related to Covid-19. In the case of healthcare, the first law was passed on 26 February (law number: 2024634), a week after the first massive outbreak, its key changes include “prohibition of exporting essential medicines for infectious diseases; expansion of epidemiological investigation personnel; supply of masks to vulnerable groups”. Under the same legal title, two additional healthcare laws were passed in August (law number: 2102648) and in September (law number: 2104173) to make foreign nationals pay Covid-19 expenses (the former) or to provide psychological support to infected patients and medical personnel, respectively (the latter).

As for the financial support, both orthodox and unorthodox social policy measures were adopted. On the one hand, a piece of orthodox social policy legislation (law number: 2024870) passed on 27 April, took the form of social assistance (under the name “emergency disaster support”) and laid the legal grounds to prepare additional supplementary budgets beyond the first one implemented on 17 March. On the other hand, two pieces of legislation passed in March (law number: 2024814) and April (law number: 2024895) fall into the “social policy by other means” category in that both offer tax benefits to the beneficiaries, e.g. “tax reduction or exemption for SMEs located in special disaster areas” or “tax reduction for those who voluntarily reduced the amount of rent for their tenants”. Finally, there was one family benefit law (law number: 2103519) and one piece of education legislation (law number: 2104167) whose key contents concern “increase of family care period to maximum 10 days a year” and “allowing the university to reduce/exempt the tuition fee” respectively.

The analysis of supplementary budget proposals approved in 2020 demonstrates that minimizing the Covid-19-related damage has been the overriding concern in South Korea. Upon examining the submission record of supplementary budget proposals since 2004, it is clear that 2020 was the first instance of more than one supplementary budget being submitted. In contrast, for 2020, there had already been four rounds of supplementary budgets approved by October: on 17 March, on 30 April, on 3 July, and on 22 September. Reading the rationale behind each supplementary budget’s introduction, it is clear that each budget had been approved to support people affected by the pandemic. For instance, the first budget proposal specifies that the money will be spent in response to the pandemic, supporting small-size merchants, stabilizing people’s livelihoods, supporting the travel/tourism industries, e.g. low-fare flights, or hard-hit regions, e.g. Daegu. The second budget features the issuing of a national bond and providing an emergency disaster subsidy to all households, e.g. a four-person household received KRW 1 million.⁴ The third budget paid particular attention to hard-hit industries and support for youths. The fourth budget prioritized supporting the hitherto marginalized parts of society, e.g. subsidizing remote education costs for middle school students, increasing equity between beneficiaries, e.g. between corporate and private taxi drivers, or increasing the budget for vaccine development.

BIPARTISAN POLITICAL DYNAMICS

With respect to South Korea’s social policy responses, two political dynamics merit our attention—swift bipartisan agreement and momentum-building for further welfare state consolidation.

If we compare changes in two key macroeconomic indicators—GDP growth rate and unemployment rate—South Korea outperformed other developed countries during the pandemic period. For a systematic comparison, Tables 1 and 2 list three quarterly rates of GDP growth and unemployment rate data for 37 OECD countries—4th quarter 2019, 1st quarter 2020, 2nd quarter 2020; as indicated in Column F in Tables 1 and 2, the average GDP growth and unemployment rate changes between the three periods were a 2.23% decrease and 0.75% increase, respectively. From this, it is clear that GDP growth has not declined and the unemployment rate has not risen to the extent seen in other countries (the OECD averages were a 5.2% decrease in GDP growth and a 0.75% increase in the unemployment rate).

By all means, the biggest contributing factor to the minimal macroeconomic damage was South Korea’s successful quarantine performance. However, it should not be ignored that the legislative and budgetary social policy responses the country took to contain the Covid-19 damage were designed and implemented in a swift bipartisan manner. This could be demonstrated by contrasting legislation and budget introduction patterns in 2020 with other periods. Considering that there was a general election in 2020, the period of interest for this

4 EUR 730 based on the October 2020 exchange rate.

Table 1. OECD (and Taiwan) GDP growth rate: 4th quarter 2019 – 2nd quarter 2020

	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Fourth Quarter 2019	First Quarter 2020	Second Quarter 2020	Change between Fourth Quarter 2019 and First Quarter 2020	Change between First Quarter 2020 and Second Quarter 2020	Average change
Australia	0.6	-0.3	-7.0	-0.81	-6.73	-3.77
Canada	0.1	-2.1	-11.5	-2.25	-9.40	-5.83
France	-0.2	-5.9	-13.8	-5.68	-7.94	-6.81
Germany	0.0	-2.0	-9.7	-2.00	-7.67	-4.84
Italy	-0.2	-5.5	-12.8	-5.24	-7.33	-6.29
Japan	-1.8	-0.6	-7.9	1.21	-7.34	-3.06
South Korea	1.3	-1.3	-3.2	-2.59	-1.87	-2.23
Mexico	-0.6	-1.2	-17.1	-0.58	-15.89	-8.24
Spain	0.4	-5.2	-17.8	-5.66	-12.54	-9.10
Sweden	0.1	0.2	-8.3	0.07	-8.50	-4.21
Taiwan	3.7	2.5	0.3	-1.2	-2.2	-1.7
Turkey	2.0	-0.1	-11.0	-2.12	-10.91	-6.52
United Kingdom	0.0	-2.2	-20.4	-2.19	-18.19	-10.19
United States	0.6	-1.3	-9.1	-1.85	-7.83	-4.84
OECD average	0.4	-2.1	-10.0	-2.5	-7.9	-5.2

paper includes part of two different legislative sessions—20th and 21st legislation sessions; for comparability's sake, I chose four other years when the general election was held in April—2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016—and examined the bill introduction patterns of social policy legislation submitted and passed between 1 January and 30 September.

Three pieces of evidence pertinent to political dynamics indicate that the social policy legislation passed in 2020 tended to be more bipartisan and swifter. The first piece of evidence concerns the submission entity. In South Korea, any bill can be introduced by an individual legislator, a standing committee head, or cabinet member; among the three, legislation introduced by standing committee reflects bipartisan consensus (Shim, 2016). From this perspective, as illustrated in Figure 2, social policy bills passed in 2020 was clearly more bipartisan, since 94% of that year's bills were introduced by standing committee heads, more than twice as many compared to the previous periods. Second, whether a law is passed in the original or revised form also indicates the degree of political consensus. Even in this sense, the year 2020 differed from other periods because more than 90% of social policy laws were passed in the original form, in contrast to 62% in the previous years. Third, how much time it took from the submission to enactment of a bill is a proxy indicating how swiftly the legislation was handled. On this, social policy legislation in 2020 took a dramatically shorter time for passage than in previous years—1.78 days on average compared to 11.1 days on average in other years. As for the eight social policy laws whose motivation can be directly attributed to coping with Covid-19, the swift and bipartisan aspects can be likewise observed—75% enacted in the original form, 88% proposed by standing committee heads, and 0.62 days taken to pass on average.

The introduction patterns of the supplementary budgets in 2020 resemble those of the social policy legislation in their bipartisan and swift nature. As pointed out earlier, four rounds of supplementary budgets were proposed and approved by October 2020 to financially support the pandemic-stricken public; this is extraordinary given that there only had been 11 supplementary budgets approved between 2004 and 2019 and no single year saw more than one round. Unlike legislation, budgets can only be proposed by the government, so the biparti-

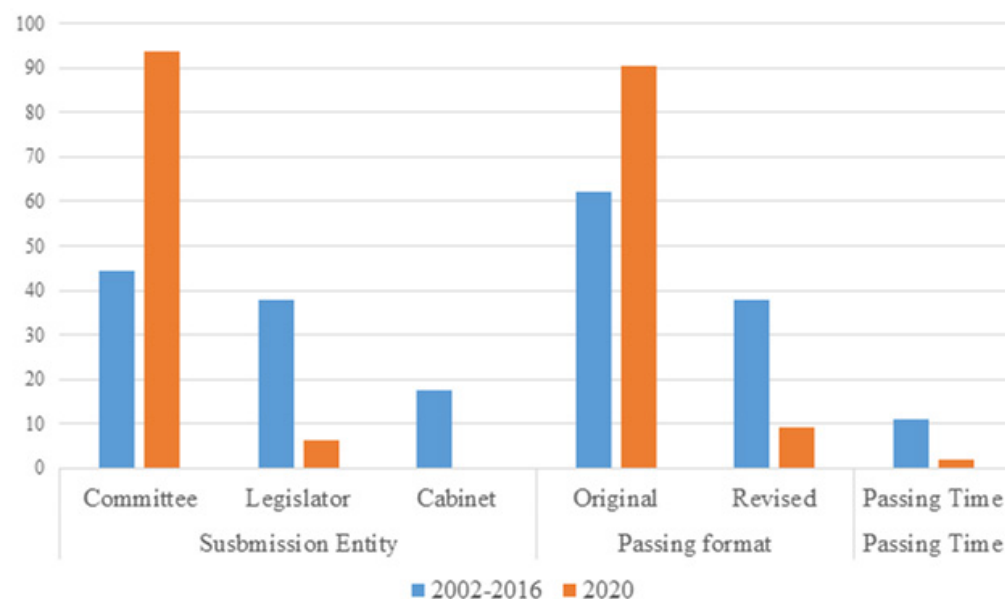
Table 2. OECD (and Taiwan) Unemployment rate: 4th quarter 2019 – 2nd quarter 2020

	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Fourth Quarter 2019	First Quarter 2020	Second Quarter 2020	Change between Fourth Quarter 2019 and First Quarter 2020	Change between First Quarter 2020 and Second Quarter 2020	Average change
Australia	5.2	5.2	7.0	0.03	1.77	0.90
Canada	5.7	6.3	13.0	0.60	6.70	3.65
France	8.2	7.7	7.1	-0.50	-0.63	-0.57
Germany	3.2	3.6	4.2	0.40	0.57	0.48
Italy	9.5	9.2	8.4	-0.37	-0.80	-0.58
Japan	2.3	2.4	2.8	0.17	0.33	0.25
South Korea	3.6	3.7	4.2	0.10	0.50	0.30
Mexico	3.4	3.5	4.8	0.06	1.30	0.68
Spain	13.8	14.0	15.5	0.13	1.53	0.83
Sweden	6.9	7.2	8.5	0.33	1.33	0.83
Taiwan	3.7	3.7	4.1	0	0.4	0.19
Turkey	13.3	12.7	13.4	-0.60	0.70	0.05
United Kingdom	3.7	3.9	3.9	0.17	0.03	0.10
United States	3.5	3.8	13.0	0.30	9.20	4.75
OECD average	5.8	5.8	7.3	0.08	1.42	0.75

Note 1: Because OECD data does not include Taiwan, both GDP growth rate and unemployment rate for Taiwan are derived from the National Statistical Bureau of Taiwan (<https://eng.stat.gov.tw/>)

Note 2: Columns D, E, F are calculated as follows—
Column D: 2020q1 (Column B) - 2019q4 (Column A)
Column E: 2020q2 (Column C) - 2020q1 (Column B)
Column F: (Column D + E)/2

Figure 2. Social policy legislation submission entity, enactment form, and passage time: 2002–2020



san nature cannot be examined with the submission entity; however, all the supplementary budgets since 2004 went through the roll-call votes in the legislature from which the degree of their bipartisan nature can be judged. Comparing the average proportion of those voting “yes” for the supplementary budget, it was clear that the year 2020 was more consensual than the previous periods—95% agreement versus 83% agreement. Moreover, the average time-lag between the budget proposal and approval was 16.5 days in 2020, in contrast to 41.27 days in the previous years; this indicates that the supplementary budgets were processed in a swifter manner than previously.

PROSPECTS FOR WELFARE STATE CONSOLIDATION

In addition to the swift and bipartisan social policies South Korea enacted in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, there have been two signs that the country can take advantage of this crisis to further consolidate its welfare state.

First, a path to welfare state consolidation can be traced from the current administration’s “Korean New Deal” plan. Although it has not yet materialized in either legislative or budgetary form, President Moon Jae-in unveiled an ambitious road map, “The Korean New Deal” in July 2020. The plan consists of three pillars—the Digital New Deal, Green New Deal, and strengthening the social security net—with a massive investment of KRW 160 trillion. For the third pillar, a KRW 28.4 trillion investment is planned and the key social policy initiatives include i) gradually extending the coverage of unemployment insurance from 14 million workers in 2015 to 21 million by 2025, ii) expanding work injury coverage from the current nine categories to 14 categories (as a result of including agency workers), and iii) introducing a national employment support system from which those below 50% of median income can receive job-seeking service support as well as an allowance. Turning a “crisis” as an “opportunity” for welfare state expansion is not unprecedented in South Korea. While the country was going through the IMF bailout during the Asian Financial Crisis in the late 1990s, the then president Kim Dae Jung not only expanded the coverage of National Health Insurance, Unemployment Insurance, and National Pension but also substantially extended the public assistance scheme through the introduction of the National Basic Livelihood Scheme (Shim, 2016). Needless to say, the extent of welfare state consolidation achieved at this time went far beyond what the IMF advised. Similarly, President Moon’s “Korean New Deal” plan, if implemented as envisaged, can not only take the country a long way out of the economic crisis following the Covid-19 pandemic but also can serve to integrate hitherto marginalized workers, e.g. freelancers or part-time workers, into the existing social security net.

Another instance of South Korea’s welfare state expansion is welfare diffusion from the local to the national levels. A case in point is the “Youth Universal Basic Income” which was rolled out in Gyeonggi Province from April 2020 onwards under the leadership of Governor Lee Jae-Myung.⁵ The welfare scheme provides KRW 1 million per year towards youth born between 1995 and 1996 regardless of their or their parents’ income levels. As a strong proponent of the universal basic income, Governor Lee was the first to initiate such a scheme in South Korea; although the scope is limited to a very specific age group and the benefit level is quite modest for now, there is a chance that the idea can diffuse to other regions or even the national level. For instance, as mentioned previously, the second round of supplementary budget passed on 30 April concerned providing an emergency disaster subsidy to all households. This was initially designed for the lowest 70% income households, but became universal on 22 April. Governor Lee was one of the strongest advocates pushing for the universalization of the subsidy and various opinion polls, e.g. Realmeter or Korea Research, demonstrate that more than 50–58% of respondents were in favor of universal provision (those opposed trailed with roughly a 20% margin).

Going beyond this exceptional time, South Korea has seen other examples of welfare diffusion from the local to the national level. In 2009, a debate about “free meals for elementary school children” was sparked by Kim Sang Gon who was then the superintendent of education in Gyeonggi Province. A November 2009 survey showed more than 70% of elementary school parents in favor of this; consequently it was taken on-board as a main election pledge by opposition parties and progressive NGOs for the nationwide local elections in June 2010. The landslide victory by opposition parties led the Democratic Party—the biggest opposition party at the time—to even include “achievement of a universal welfare state” in its main party platform. Riding this momentum, it expanded its free pledge series as the 3F plan (three free plans) from elementary school meals to medical fees

5 Although this paper’s key focus was national-level social policy responses, it should be noted that there have been several local government welfare programs that were competitively adopted.

and childcare costs in 2011 and prepared for the upcoming elections. As a countermeasure to the opposition Democratic Party, the then right-leaning Grand National Party came up with a welfare package name “life-long customized welfare” which consists of childcare, education, employment and housing, and elderly care in October 2011 (often labelled as “70% welfare”). Going further, the party even changed its name to Saenuri party in Feb 2012 and included the slogan “building a happy welfare state” as the top party platform like the Democratic Party. This example clearly demonstrates the potential of a small but popular welfare promise in one region to lead to large-scale welfare package provision through heated welfare politics. From the perspective of welfare regime categories (Esping-Anderson, 1990), South Korea is often labelled as a “chameleon” that changes its appearance to different viewers, ranging from the classical classification to hybrid, fourth regime, distinct world, or immature ones (Powell and Kim, 2014). I hope the welfare initiatives planned in the next decade can be a stepping stone for the country to sink its welfare regime roots.

CONCLUSION

The paper had two primary goals: First, to map out South Korea’s key social policy responses vis-à-vis the Covid-19 pandemic and, second, to analyze the political dynamics that led to the observed social policy responses. By investigating the legislative and budget proposal evidence, the paper has demonstrated that the South Korean government clearly utilized social policy tools to both contain the damage as well as manage the incurred losses. Furthermore, an analysis of political steps leading to social policy responses established that the decision-making process was swift and largely bipartisan.

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APPENDIX 1: SOCIAL POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 BY POLICY AREA (SOUTH KOREA, JANUARY–SEPTEMBER 2020)

	Policy Area	Pensions	Healthcare	Long-term care and disability	Labor market	Education
(1)	Have there been any significant legislative reforms in the indicated policy area during the indicated time period?	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
(2)	If (1) yes, have any of these reforms been explicit responses to the Covid-19 pandemic?	No	N/A	N/A	No	N/A
(3)	If (2) yes, has there been significant regional variation in the implementation of these reforms?	Don't know	N/A	N/A	Don't know	N/A
(4)	Have subnational governments enacted any significant legislative reforms in the indicated policy area during the indicated time period?	Don't know	Don't know	Don't know	Don't know	Don't know
	Policy Area	Family benefits	Housing	Social assistance	Other*	
(1)	Have there been any significant legislative reforms in the indicated policy area during the indicated time period?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
(2)	If (1) yes, have any of these reforms been explicit responses to the Covid-19 pandemic?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	
(3)	If (2) yes, has there been significant regional variation in the implementation of these reforms?	Don't know	N/A	Yes	Don't know	
(4)	Have subnational governments enacted any significant legislative reforms in the indicated policy area during the indicated time period?	Don't know	Don't know	Don't know	Don't know	

* Legislative reforms in other policy areas explicitly aimed at social protection, e.g. food subsidies or tax cuts aimed at social protection.

APPENDIX 2: SOCIAL POLICY LEGISLATION IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19 (SOUTH KOREA, JANUARY–SEPTEMBER 2020)

Note: This appendix covers all major national social policy legislation published between 1 January 2020 and 30 September 2020.

Law 1		
(1)	Number of law	2024484
(2)	Name of law (original language)	기초연금법 일부개정법률안(대안)
(3)	Name of law (English)	Amendment to the Basic Pension Act
(4)	Date of first parliamentary motion	09 January 2020
(5)	Date of law's enactment	09 January 2020
(6)	Date of law's publication	21 January 2020
(7)	Is the Covid-19 pandemic explicitly mentioned as a motivation in the law or any accompanying text?	no
(8)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for the initial parliamentary motion for this law?	no
(9)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for a significant revision of the legislative project after the initial parliamentary motion?	not applicable
(10)	Note on (7)-(9)	
(11)	Was this law a legislative package that contained multiple social reform components?	no
(12)	If (11) yes, how many distinct social reform components did it contain?	not applicable

Law 1: Component 1		
(13)	Policy Area	Pensions
(14)	Brief description of reform component	Increasing the coverage of basic pensions from the lowest 40% income group to everyone.
(15)	Change in coverage of existing benefits?	yes
(16)	Duration of coverage change?	No
(17)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(18)	Note on (15)-(17)	From the lowest 40% income group to everyone
(19)	Change in generosity of existing benefits?	No
(20)	Duration of generosity change?	No
(21)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(22)	Note on (19)-(21)	not applicable
(23)	Introduction of new benefits?	No
(24)	Duration of new benefits?	not applicable
(25)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(26)	Note on (23)-(25)	not applicable
(27)	Cuts of existing benefits?	No
(28)	Note on (27)	not applicable
(29)	Estimated cost of reform in 2020 (national currency)	don't know
(30)	Estimated cost of reform in 2021 (national currency)	don't know
(31)	National Currency Code (ISO 4217)	KRW
(32)	Source of cost estimation	not applicable

Law 1: Component 1		
(33)	Note (29)-(31)	not applicable
(34)	If the implementation of the reform should already have started, has the reform been implemented?	don't know

Law 2		
(1)	Number of law	2024814
(2)	Name of law (original language)	조세특례제한법 일부개정법률안(대안)
(3)	Name of law (English)	Partial amendment to the Restriction of Special Taxation Act
(4)	Date of first parliamentary motion	17 March 2020
(5)	Date of law's enactment	17 March 2020
(6)	Date of law's publication	23 March 2020
(7)	Is the Covid-19 pandemic explicitly mentioned as a motivation in the law or any accompanying text?	yes
(8)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for the initial parliamentary motion for this law?	yes
(9)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for a significant revision of the legislative project after the initial parliamentary motion?	no
(10)	Note on (7)-(9)	
(11)	Was this law a legislative package that contained multiple social reform components?	yes
(12)	If (11) yes, how many distinct social reform components did it contain?	2

Law 2: Component 1		
(13)	Policy Area	Other (Social Policy by Other Means)
(14)	Brief description of reform component	Upon voluntarily reduction of rent due to the Corona emergency, 5% of the lost revenue will be reimbursed through the reduction of income/corporate tax; tax reduction or exemption for SMEs located in special disaster areas.
(15)	Change in coverage of existing benefits?	No
(16)	Duration of coverage change?	No
(17)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(18)	Note on (15)-(17)	not applicable
(19)	Change in generosity of existing benefits?	No
(20)	Duration of generosity change?	No
(21)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(22)	Note on (19)-(21)	not applicable
(23)	Introduction of new benefits?	yes
(24)	Duration of new benefits?	don't know
(25)	If fix-term, duration in months	don't know
(26)	Note on (23)-(25)	tax reduction
(27)	Cuts of existing benefits?	No
(28)	Note on (27)	not applicable
(29)	Estimated cost of reform in 2020 (national currency)	don't know
(30)	Estimated cost of reform in 2021 (national currency)	don't know
(31)	National Currency Code (ISO 4217)	KRW
(32)	Source of cost estimation	not applicable

Law 2: Component 1		
(33)	Note (29)-(31)	not applicable
(34)	If the implementation of the reform should already have started, has the reform been implemented?	don't know

Law 2: Component 2		
(13)	Policy Area	Other (Social Policy by Other Means)
(14)	Brief description of reform component	Tax reduction or exemption for SMEs located in special disaster areas.
(15)	Change in coverage of existing benefits?	No
(16)	Duration of coverage change?	No
(17)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(18)	Note on (15)-(17)	not applicable
(19)	Change in generosity of existing benefits?	No
(20)	Duration of generosity change?	No
(21)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(22)	Note on (19)-(21)	not applicable
(23)	Introduction of new benefits?	yes
(24)	Duration of new benefits?	don't know
(25)	If fix-term, duration in months	don't know
(26)	Note on (23)-(25)	Tax exemption for SMEs located in special disaster areas
(27)	Cuts of existing benefits?	No
(28)	Note on (27)	not applicable
(29)	Estimated cost of reform in 2020 (national currency)	don't know
(30)	Estimated cost of reform in 2021 (national currency)	don't know
(31)	National Currency Code (ISO 4217)	KRW
(32)	Source of cost estimation	not applicable
(33)	Note (29)-(31)	not applicable
(34)	If the implementation of the reform should already have started, has the reform been implemented?	don't know

Law 3		
(1)	Number of law	2024870
(2)	Name of law (original language)	긴급재난지원금 기부금 모집 및 사용에 관한 특별법안(전혜숙의원 등 17인)
(3)	Name of law (English)	Special Act on the Recruitment and Use of Donations for Emergency Disaster Support
(4)	Date of first parliamentary motion	27 April 2020
(5)	Date of law's enactment	29 April 2020
(6)	Date of law's publication	01 May 2020
(7)	Is the Covid-19 pandemic explicitly mentioned as a motivation in the law or any accompanying text?	yes
(8)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for the initial parliamentary motion for this law?	yes
(9)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for a significant revision of the legislative project after the initial parliamentary motion?	no

Law 3		
(10)	Note on (7)-(9)	
(11)	Was this law a legislative package that contained multiple social reform components?	no
(12)	If (11) yes, how many distinct social reform components did it contain?	not applicable

Law 3: Component 1		
(13)	Policy Area	Social assistance
(14)	Brief description of reform component	Provision of financial support for emergency disaster support through organizing a supplementary budget.
(15)	Change in coverage of existing benefits?	No
(16)	Duration of coverage change?	No
(17)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(18)	Note on (15)-(17)	not applicable
(19)	Change in generosity of existing benefits?	No
(20)	Duration of generosity change?	No
(21)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(22)	Note on (19)-(21)	not applicable
(23)	Introduction of new benefits?	yes
(24)	Duration of new benefits?	don't know
(25)	If fix-term, duration in months	don't know
(26)	Note on (23)-(25)	Provision of financial support for emergency disaster support
(27)	Cuts of existing benefits?	No
(28)	Note on (27)	not applicable
(29)	Estimated cost of reform in 2020 (national currency)	don't know
(30)	Estimated cost of reform in 2021 (national currency)	don't know
(31)	National Currency Code (ISO 4217)	KRW
(32)	Source of cost estimation	not applicable
(33)	Note (29)-(31)	not applicable
(34)	If the implementation of the reform should already have started, has the reform been implemented?	don't know

Law 4		
(1)	Number of law	구직자 취업촉진 및 생활안정지원에 관한 법률안(대안)
(2)	Name of law (original language)	Act on Employment Promotion and Support for Livelihood Stability for Job Seekers
(3)	Name of law (English)	20 May 2020
(4)	Date of first parliamentary motion	20 May 2020
(5)	Date of law's enactment	09 June 2020
(6)	Date of law's publication	no
(7)	Is the Covid-19 pandemic explicitly mentioned as a motivation in the law or any accompanying text?	no
(8)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for the initial parliamentary motion for this law?	not applicable
(9)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for a significant revision of the legislative project after the initial parliamentary motion?	

Law 4		
(10)	Note on (7)-(9)	no
(11)	Was this law a legislative package that contained multiple social reform components?	not applicable
(12)	If (11) yes, how many distinct social reform components did it contain?	구직자 취업촉진 및 생활안정지원에 관한 법률안(대안)

Law 4: Component 1		
(13)	Policy Area	Labor market
(14)	Brief description of reform component	Providing employment support services to citizens who are unable to find a job despite their working ability and willingness to find a job; Provide job-seeking allowance for job seekers in low-income districts.
(15)	Change in coverage of existing benefits?	No
(16)	Duration of coverage change?	No
(17)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(18)	Note on (15)-(17)	not applicable
(19)	Change in generosity of existing benefits?	No
(20)	Duration of generosity change?	No
(21)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(22)	Note on (19)-(21)	not applicable
(23)	Introduction of new benefits?	yes
(24)	Duration of new benefits?	don't know
(25)	If fix-term, duration in months	don't know
(26)	Note on (23)-(25)	Job-seeking allowance for job seekers in low-income districts
(27)	Cuts of existing benefits?	No
(28)	Note on (27)	not applicable
(29)	Estimated cost of reform in 2020 (national currency)	don't know
(30)	Estimated cost of reform in 2021 (national currency)	don't know
(31)	National Currency Code (ISO 4217)	KRW
(32)	Source of cost estimation	not applicable
(33)	Note (29)-(31)	not applicable
(34)	If the implementation of the reform should already have started, has the reform been implemented?	don't know

Law 5		
(1)	Number of law	2024942
(2)	Name of law (original language)	고용보험 및 산업재해보상보험의 보험료징수 등에 관한 법률 일부 개정법률안(대안)
(3)	Name of law (English)	Partial amendment to the Act on the Collection of Insurance Premiums for Employment Insurance and Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance
(4)	Date of first parliamentary motion	20 May 2020
(5)	Date of law's enactment	20 May 2020
(6)	Date of law's publication	09 June 2020
(7)	Is the Covid-19 pandemic explicitly mentioned as a motivation in the law or any accompanying text?	no
(8)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for the initial parliamentary motion for this law?	no

Law 5		
(9)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for a significant revision of the legislative project after the initial parliamentary motion?	not applicable
(10)	Note on (7)-(9)	not applicable
(11)	Was this law a legislative package that contained multiple social reform components?	no
(12)	If (11) yes, how many distinct social reform components did it contain?	not applicable

Law 5: Component 1		
(13)	Policy Area	Labor market/employment insurance
(14)	Brief description of reform component	Employment insurance is applied to artists to ensure a stable livelihood and their faster re-employment.
(15)	Change in coverage of existing benefits?	yes
(16)	Duration of coverage change?	No
(17)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(18)	Note on (15)-(17)	Employment insurance extended to artists
(19)	Change in generosity of existing benefits?	No
(20)	Duration of generosity change?	No
(21)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(22)	Note on (19)-(21)	not applicable
(23)	Introduction of new benefits?	No
(24)	Duration of new benefits?	not applicable
(25)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(26)	Note on (23)-(25)	not applicable
(27)	Cuts of existing benefits?	No
(28)	Note on (27)	not applicable
(29)	Estimated cost of reform in 2020 (national currency)	don't know
(30)	Estimated cost of reform in 2021 (national currency)	don't know
(31)	National Currency Code (ISO 4217)	KRW
(32)	Source of cost estimation	not applicable
(33)	Note (29)-(31)	not applicable
(34)	If the implementation of the reform should already have started, has the reform been implemented?	don't know

Law 6		
(1)	Number of law	고용보험법 일부개정법률안(대안)
(2)	Name of law (original language)	Partial revision of the Employment Insurance Act
(3)	Name of law (English)	20/05/2020
(4)	Date of first parliamentary motion	20/05/2020
(5)	Date of law's enactment	09/06/2020
(6)	Date of law's publication	no
(7)	Is the Covid-19 pandemic explicitly mentioned as a motivation in the law or any accompanying text?	no
(8)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for the initial parliamentary motion for this law?	not applicable

Law 6		
(9)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for a significant revision of the legislative project after the initial parliamentary motion?	
(10)	Note on (7)-(9)	no
(11)	Was this law a legislative package that contained multiple social reform components?	not applicable
(12)	If (11) yes, how many distinct social reform components did it contain?	고용보험법 일부개정법률안(대안)

Law 6: Component 1		
(13)	Policy Area	Labor market/employment insurance
(14)	Brief description of reform component	Child subsidy is provided to artists in case they can't work due to childbirth, miscarriage, or stillbirth.
(15)	Change in coverage of existing benefits?	yes
(16)	Duration of coverage change?	No
(17)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(18)	Note on (15)-(17)	Child subsidy extended to artists
(19)	Change in generosity of existing benefits?	No
(20)	Duration of generosity change?	No
(21)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(22)	Note on (19)-(21)	not applicable
(23)	Introduction of new benefits?	No
(24)	Duration of new benefits?	not applicable
(25)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(26)	Note on (23)-(25)	not applicable
(27)	Cuts of existing benefits?	No
(28)	Note on (27)	not applicable
(29)	Estimated cost of reform in 2020 (national currency)	don't know
(30)	Estimated cost of reform in 2021 (national currency)	don't know
(31)	National Currency Code (ISO 4217)	KRW
(32)	Source of cost estimation	not applicable
(33)	Note (29)-(31)	not applicable
(34)	If the implementation of the reform should already have started, has the reform been implemented?	don't know

Law 7		
(1)	Number of law	2024946
(2)	Name of law (original language)	교원의 노동조합 설립 및 운영 등에 관한 법률 일부개정법률안(대안)
(3)	Name of law (English)	Amendment to the Act on Establishment and Operation of Teachers' Labor Unions
(4)	Date of first parliamentary motion	20 May 2020
(5)	Date of law's enactment	20 May 2020
(6)	Date of law's publication	09 June 2020
(7)	Is the Covid-19 pandemic explicitly mentioned as a motivation in the law or any accompanying text?	no

Law 7		
(8)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for the initial parliamentary motion for this law?	no
(9)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for a significant revision of the legislative project after the initial parliamentary motion?	not applicable
(10)	Note on (7)-(9)	not applicable
(11)	Was this law a legislative package that contained multiple social reform components?	no
(12)	If (11) yes, how many distinct social reform components did it contain?	not applicable

Law 7: Component 1		
(13)	Policy Area	Labor market/labor relations
(14)	Brief description of reform component	Recognizing the right to organize for teachers
(15)	Change in coverage of existing benefits?	No
(16)	Duration of coverage change?	yes
(17)	If fix-term, duration in months	No
(18)	Note on (15)-(17)	not applicable
(19)	Change in generosity of existing benefits?	Right to organize extended to teachers
(20)	Duration of generosity change?	No
(21)	If fix-term, duration in months	No
(22)	Note on (19)-(21)	not applicable
(23)	Introduction of new benefits?	not applicable
(24)	Duration of new benefits?	No
(25)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(26)	Note on (23)-(25)	not applicable
(27)	Cuts of existing benefits?	not applicable
(28)	Note on (27)	No
(29)	Estimated cost of reform in 2020 (national currency)	not applicable
(30)	Estimated cost of reform in 2021 (national currency)	don't know
(31)	National Currency Code (ISO 4217)	KRW
(32)	Source of cost estimation	
(33)	Note (29)-(31)	not applicable
(34)	If the implementation of the reform should already have started, has the reform been implemented?	not applicable

Law 8		
(1)	Number of law	2024947
(2)	Name of law (original language)	민간임대주택에 관한 특별법 일부개정법률안(대안)
(3)	Name of law (English)	Partial amendment to the Special Act on Private Rental Housing
(4)	Date of first parliamentary motion	20 May 2020
(5)	Date of law's enactment	20 May 2020
(6)	Date of law's publication	09 June 2020
(7)	Is the Covid-19 pandemic explicitly mentioned as a motivation in the law or any accompanying text?	no

Law 8		
(8)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for the initial parliamentary motion for this law?	no
(9)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for a significant revision of the legislative project after the initial parliamentary motion?	not applicable
(10)	Note on (7)-(9)	
(11)	Was this law a legislative package that contained multiple social reform components?	no
(12)	If (11) yes, how many distinct social reform components did it contain?	not applicable

Law 8: Component 1		
(13)	Policy Area	Housing
(14)	Brief description of reform component	In the case of registered rental housing, the rent can be increased only within the range of 5% a year during the rental contract period.
(15)	Change in coverage of existing benefits?	No
(16)	Duration of coverage change?	No
(17)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(18)	Note on (15)-(17)	not applicable
(19)	Change in generosity of existing benefits?	yes
(20)	Duration of generosity change?	No
(21)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(22)	Note on (19)-(21)	The rent can be increased only within the range of 5% a year
(23)	Introduction of new benefits?	No
(24)	Duration of new benefits?	not applicable
(25)	If fix-term, duration in months	not applicable
(26)	Note on (23)-(25)	not applicable
(27)	Cuts of existing benefits?	No
(28)	Note on (27)	not applicable
(29)	Estimated cost of reform in 2020 (national currency)	don't know
(30)	Estimated cost of reform in 2021 (national currency)	don't know
(31)	National Currency Code (ISO 4217)	KRW
(32)	Source of cost estimation	not applicable
(33)	Note (29)-(31)	not applicable
(34)	If the implementation of the reform should already have started, has the reform been implemented?	don't know

Law 9		
(1)	Number of law	2104171
(2)	Name of law (original language)	한부모가족지원법 일부개정법률안(대안)
(3)	Name of law (English)	Amendment to the Single-parent Family Support Act
(4)	Date of first parliamentary motion	23 September 2020
(5)	Date of law's enactment	24 September 2020
(6)	Date of law's publication	not yet
(7)	Is the Covid-19 pandemic explicitly mentioned as a motivation in the law or any accompanying text?	no

Law 9		
(8)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for the initial parliamentary motion for this law?	no
(9)	Was the Covid-19 pandemic a motivation for a significant revision of the legislative project after the initial parliamentary motion?	not applicable
(10)	Note on (7)-(9)	
(11)	Was this law a legislative package that contained multiple social reform components?	no
(12)	If (11) yes, how many distinct social reform components did it contain?	not applicable

Law 9: Component 1		
(13)	Policy Area	Family benefits
(14)	Brief description of reform component	Allowing foreign parents to receive Childcare Support in case they raise children with Korean nationality.
(15)	Change in coverage of existing benefits?	yes
(16)	Duration of coverage change?	No
(17)	<i>If fix-term</i> , duration in months	not applicable
(18)	Note on (15)-(17)	Allowing foreign parents to receive Childcare Support
(19)	Change in generosity of existing benefits?	No
(20)	Duration of generosity change?	No
(21)	<i>If fix-term</i> , duration in months	not applicable
(22)	Note on (19)-(21)	not applicable
(23)	Introduction of new benefits?	No
(24)	Duration of new benefits?	not applicable
(25)	<i>If fix-term</i> , duration in months	not applicable
(26)	Note on (23)-(25)	not applicable
(27)	Cuts of existing benefits?	No
(28)	Note on (27)	not applicable
(29)	Estimated cost of reform in 2020 (national currency)	don't know
(30)	Estimated cost of reform in 2021 (national currency)	don't know
(31)	National Currency Code (ISO 4217)	KRW
(32)	Source of cost estimation	not applicable
(33)	Note (29)-(31)	not applicable
(34)	If the implementation of the reform should already have started, has the reform been implemented?	don't know